THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Generally, delivery of letters at destination is not delayed. However, occasional instances of delay in delivery of letters may occur due to unavoidable reasons such as natural calamities, late running of mail carrying trains, buses or planes, inadequacy of delivery manpower and sudden and exceptionally heavy volume of mails like corporate mail and Greeting mails etc.

(b) Generally, letters originating within the city are delivered on thenext working day subject to the limitations mentioned in (a) above. The following steps have been taken to ensure expeditious delivery of mails in cities :

(i) A separate system for handling local letters called the Green Channel has been set up in the cities.

(ii) Delivery arrangements in cities are reviewed and in some cities deliveries have been ordered to be restructured to find delivery manpower for deficient areas.

(iii) Proposals for creation of additional delivery manpower have been taken up with the Ministry of Finance.

(iv) Rationalising of mail processing by prioritised and segmented handling of mails of different categoreis according to their time-sensitivity.

(v) Mopeds have been provided to postmen serving in heavier beats of some selected cities for delivery of mail.

(vi) Constant monitoring is undertaken of the delivery of mail in various cities both at the headquarters and field level.

Expansion of Facilities at Chandigarh Railway Station

1541. SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for expansion of various facilities at Chandigarh Railway Station during 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total amount sanctioned therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Works relating to provision of washable apron on line No. 1 and 4 and shelter on platform No. 2/3, development of coaching terminal facilities and extension of shelter on platform No. 1 have been taken up at Chandigarh at a total cost of Rs. 617.98 lakh with an outlay of Rs. 87.91 lakh during 1997-98.

Inadequate funding of Rural Employment Schemes

1542. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have fixed labour and material ratio of 60:40 in execution of works under various Rural Employment Schemes;

(b) whether this labour and material ratio is not practical in view of increased material cost and the consequent complaints in the execution of works;

(c) whether the Government have received proposals for amendment in the ratio of labour and material from various States;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU): (a) Under the rural employment programmes i.e. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), wage-material ratio is fixed at 60:40.

(b) to (d) There have been requests from some sources to revise the wage-material ratio. The primary objective of JRY and EAS is to provide wage employment, the major portion of expenditure under the programmes, therefore, should go towards the creation of wage-employment for the rural poor. The wage-material ratio is, therefore, kept at 60:40.

Power Generation Capacity in Gujarat

1543. SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the power generation capacity of each power station in Gujarat has increased during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any action plan during the current Financial year to increase the power generation capacity of power stations of the state; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. AKAGH) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.